

English version

Announcement by the Consulate General of Italy in New York Addressed to the Italian Community

On the 12th and 14th of February 2009 the Consulate General of Italy has organized two events devoted to the cure of leukemia. One of the concrete objectives of these events is to test the highest possible number of potential bone marrow cell donors to find a genetic match for a young Italian who urgently needs a transplant.

The Consulate General invites the Italian Community to tangibly express its solidarity towards James Politi, 31 years old, who is being treated at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center of New York.

James was born in Monza, Italy, from an American mother and an Italian father. He works in Washington DC as a journalist of the Financial Times and writes on the American economic and trade policy. He is a great soccer fan and two years ago he ran the NYC marathon. He is planning to get married this fall.

To be tested for a possible donation is very simple. A mouth swab is used in a process that lasts a few seconds to collect cells from the mouth. DNA is then extracted from the cells present on the swab. Personnel will be present to aid with the testing. The Politi family will cover the cost of the tests, which is \$25.00 per person. Any voluntary contributions from the participants will be greatly appreciated.

In addition to potentially being helpful for curing James's disease, being tested could save lives within the Italian and Italian-American communities, as well as the life of anybody else who needs a bone marrow cells transplant. For persons of mixed ethnicity, a "perfect match" is often difficult to find. Each person who will accept to be tested will automatically have his/her data included in the National US Registry of donors with the possibility of being called to donate bone marrow cells in favor of anyone who needs such transplant.

If a donor is found to match a person in need, there are two ways of collecting bone marrow stem cells: 1) the bone marrow is extracted from the back of the donor's pelvic bone, by way of a procedure involving anesthesia and lasting about 45 minutes, or 2) the bone marrow stem cells are released into the blood stream by way of injections of a drug over five days. These blood-forming cells are then extracted from the donor's blood in a process similar to a regular platelet donation. This second and very simple procedure is increasingly used to collect bone marrow cells.

In the US, people between the ages of 18 and 60 years are eligible to donate bone marrow cells.

We look forward to seeing many of you participate in these two events to help James, as well as any other compatriot or person who is suffering from leukemia.

This is an act of caring and generosity which will demonstrate the strong sense of solidarity that exists within our community.

James's parents, Mauro and Jane, his sister Katerina and her husband Mark, and his fiancée Stephanie will be present to welcome you and thank you for your participation.

The two events will take place at the Consulate General of Italy in New York (690 Park Avenue) on the following dates:

Thursday, February 12, 2009 from 3 to 8 pm;

Saturday, February 14, 2009 from 11 am to 4 pm.

You can confirm your participation by writing an e mail to anna.malafronte@esteri.it or calling 212 439 8609

Document Required: Social Security Number, or US Driver's License, or Passport